

SECURITY INFORMATION
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

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INTELLOFAK 1A

COUNTRY USSR (Estonian SSR)

DATE DISTR 25 Feb. 1952

SUBJECT Vasalemma Airfield

NO. OF PAGES 2 25X1

PLACE ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS. 3 25X1
(LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF INFO.

SUPPLEMENT REPORT NO.

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1. Soviet naval officers supervised construction work at the new naval airfield of Vasalemma (59°14' N/24°16' E), Estonian SSR. The field was in a woods about 6 km southeast of the coast. There was a 60x1,500 meter E-W runway which sloped slightly to both sides. Soviet officers said that it was to be extended to a total length of 2,000 meters. The runway had a bed 1 meter deep which was filled with a layer of rubble about 50 cm thick, a layer of sand, a layer of coarse concrete about 25 cm thick, and a layer of fine concrete about 20 cm thick. (1) Granite stone formed a gutter along the edge of the runway. The water is led into clay pipes 40 cm long and about 20 cm in diameter. There were also concrete sewers about 1 meter in diameter. Two concrete and parallel side strips between 12 and 15 meters wide led from the runway to a circular taxiway which had the same width and ran around the landing field. A former estate was torn down in connection with the improvement of the field. (2)
2. The route from the PW camp to the landing field passed a large three-story brick building which civilians called naval pilot and parachute school. The soldiers quartered in the pilot school wore black uniforms and seamen's caps. (3)
3. The airfield, about 2 1/2 km, was to be completed by the end of 1949. The construction of hangars was planned. The pilot school was occupied by about 200 soldiers. About three officers' houses were west of the school building. Three twin-engine flying boats with floats and retractable landing gear were parked on the edge of the field. (4) PWs, former pilots, said that the planes were American made. Ten parachutists jumped from one plane. Single-engine biplanes were also parked at the field.
4. The landing area of the airfield located 6 km north of Vasalemma consisted of a level meadow and cleared woodland. The field had an east-west runway, 1,200 meters long and covered with hexagonal concrete slabs 15 cm thick. A

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Class. Changed To: TS S @

Auth: HR 70-2

Date: 18 July 78 By

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taxiway 8 to 10 meters wide ran around the landing field. Fire lanes were being cut into the woods on the southern side of the field.

5. Two three-story barracks buildings, each 40x12 meters, south of the field, were occupied by naval soldiers wearing black uniforms and a propeller on their epaulets. Hangars were not seen.
6. About 10 to 12 twin-engine flying boats were standing in the southeastern corner of what was called the old airfield. The flying boats were fitted with radial engines, two-bladed propellers, a nose wheel and landing gear retracting rearward, a nose compartment with a plexiglass roof, floats under the wings, a plexiglass machine gun turret on the rear end of the fuselage, and single rudders. There was a conspicuous step about in line with the trailing edge of the wing. From there the fuselage tapered considerably. (4)
7. The Vasalema airfield was about 4x3 km. At the southern edge of the field there was a range of hills with three large quarries. The stones broken there were used for the improvement of the airfield and the construction of a circular taxiway. The landing field was being drained and provided with a concrete runway. Five tunnels which were about 100 meters apart and which were 40 meters wide and 8 meters high were being built into the hill. After about 50 meters the tunnels were interconnected so that a large underground vault was built. Stone columns supported the roof of this vault. In mid-1943 the walls of the tunnels were boarded up, the roofs were reinforced by I girders and then the tunnels were concreted. The tunnels could hold single and twin-engine aircraft. (5)
8. The airfield installations were completed in August 1949, the underground tunnels and hangars were concreted but still without doors and equipment.
9. Since mid-1943 the airfield was occupied by 40 to 45 fighters, twin-engine seaplanes with wheeled landing gears, biplanes and three-engine aircraft similar to the Ju-52. Parachute jumps were practiced from the three-engine aircraft. (6)

Comments.

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- (1) [redacted]
- (2) The data confirm and supplement previous information. See Annex 2 for sketch showing layout of airfield.
- (3) A naval air unit is confirmed as being stationed at the field. The uniforms, reportedly black, are believed to have actually been a very dark blue such as is worn by the Soviet Navy.
- (4) The data contained in references, with regard to this amphibious aircraft, are so much at variance that this type cannot be identified. From the sketches supplied by source II it is believed that the plane was a Drummer-Albatros of type G-64. With regard to the statements made by other sources it is not quite clear whether this multi-purpose craft was actually modified by a rebuilding of the cockpit and the installation of a gun station as indicated in the sketch attached as Annex 3.
- (5) While the other sources left the airfield no later than 1947, source of paragraphs 7-9 seems to have stayed there up to 1949. For this reason this source may have noticed things unknown to the other sources. It is noteworthy that several other returnees reportedly noticed the construction of underground hangars in the Leningrad area in 1949. This information requires confirmation.
- (6) The occupation of this modern field by a fighter unit, presumably a naval fighter regiment, is plausible, but it requires confirmation. Whether old Ju-52s or the usual LI-2s were being used for parachute training is of little importance compared with the fact that amphibious planes were stationed at this field.

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